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CENTENNIAL HISTORY

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church, of Titusville, Pa.,

By SAMUEL MINOR.

Read to the Church Sunday, July 2, 1876.

*It has been said with some degree of truth, that history is only philosophy teaching by examples. Large portions of the scriptures are made up of the biographies of individuals, and the doings of tribes and nations.

The Acts of the Apostles will never lose their conspicuous place in the divine record, and even the Books of Chronicles, which to some, seem encumbered with long lists of useless names, are found, when properly understood, to form very important links in the chain of human events. While these records were written that they might be preserved, there were also other purposes, and among them that stated by the Apostle Paul, when he writes to the Corinthians as follows: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come."

It is then highly appropriate that in this Centennial year the history of a local church, founded as we believe it to be, upon the Holy Scriptures, should be preserved as due to the past, and for the benefit alike of ourselves, and those who may come after us. In accordance with this spirit, so far as a text is needed for the present occasion, it is selected from the Book of Job, a man who, although supposed to be the oldest of sacred writers, yet looked back with great interest to the ages which preceded him.

*Note.—The pastor, Rev. Robert Sloss, having been connected with the church only about eighteen months, and learning that Samuel Minor had heretofore collected most of the necessary facts, requested that this address should be prepared and delivered by him, which was accordingly done.

In the 8th chapter and 8th verse of Job it is written:

"For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself for the search of their fathers; shall they not teach thee and tell thee?"

FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES IN NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AT TIONESTA.

Aside from such religious services as were held by priests in the French army, or by chaplains in the English and Colonial armies, in the section of country west of the Allegheny river and south of what is now New York, the first regular preaching, so far as known, was by Rev. David Zeisberger, a Moravian missionary. In 1767, with two Christian Indians, he reached Tionesta Creek, about twenty-five miles up the river from its junction with French Creek, at what is now Franklin. He built a chapel and began his work. He was soon driven out and went about eight miles up the Allegheny, to what has since been known as Hickory, the Indian name of which was Mahusquikikoken. After many discouragements he was driven out by the persecutions of heathen Indians, and left in April, 1770. We have, then, but just passed the Centennnial period when the true Gospel was first regularly proclaimed in this section of country.

JONATHAN TITUS AND SAMUEL KERR—1793.

In 1793 Jonathan Titus and Samuel Kerr came to what is now Titusville. They came as surveyors, and followed their vocation in behalf of the then distant owners of the land, during the pleasant parts of the year. In 1798 they took up land and made a permanent location.

The farm of Mr. Titus embraced the western and that of Mr. Kerr the eastern part of the present Titusville. Their cabins were built near the dividing line of their lands, east of Martin street and

South of Pine street, as now designated. These were succeeded by houses of logs hewn square, near the same location. In this log house of Samuel Kerr was born Michael C. Kerr, his son, now Speaker of the House of Representatives, in the Congress of the United States.

FROM 1790 to 1800

settlers began to come in somewhat rapidly, some from the direction of Pittsburgh and others from New York. They settled on farms in all directions from the present Titusville, and no one then knew where a town would grow up.

WILLIAM REYNOLDS—1797—CHERRYTREE.

In 1797 William Reynolds and family, originally from England, located six miles south, at what has become the village of Cherrytree. Among them was their daughter Lydia, who became the grandmother of Lyman Stewart, one of the present elders of this church. When a girl she had listened to the preaching of Toplady, author of the world-wide hymn commencing

"Rock of ages cleft for me,"

and her recollections of his saintly character and spirit were warm and vivid to her latest years. It is a singular coincidence that that hymn was written just 100 years ago.

WILLIAM NEILL—1798—NEILLTOWN.

In 1798 Mr. William Neill, the grandfather of Joseph A. Neill, another of the present elders of this church, located about ten miles northeasterly, at a place since known as Neilltown. Thus the cabins became dotted here and there in the wilderness.

1800—COUNTIES ORGANIZED.

In 1800 the following named counties were organized in the western part of the State: Crawford, Warren, Venango, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Mercer and Erie. By this time settlements had become somewhat numerous, and were composed largely of earnest men. There was a large element of Scotch-Irish; other sections, however, contributing their proportion.

EARLY REVIVALS.

During these years extensive revivals prevailed in the eastern part of the country. Their influences climbed up the Alleghenies and trickled down their western slopes. Soon the entire region from Pittsburgh northward became all alive, and so great was the religious interest in all that section it is recorded that many thought the Millennium must indeed be near at hand.

Could these pioneer fathers have visited the same locality about seventy-five years later, and witnessed some of the scenes of the oil excitement about 1865, their joyful expectations would have been most wonderfully modified.

1800—REVS. STOCKTON AND TAIT.

In 1800 Richard Stockton began to preach at Meadville, and Samuel Tait at Cool Spring, five miles from the present town of Mercer. The labors of these men were of a missionary character, and frequently reached this neighborhood. The worthy memory of this last mentioned man is preserved in the name of Samuel Tait Neill, one of the present deacons of this church.

Titusville was at that time called, sometimes "Oil Creek," and sometimes "Titus's."

1801—PRESBYTERY OF ERIE.

The Presbytery of Erie was formed in 1801, and held its first meeting April 13, 1802, in Beaver county. At that meeting requests were made for "supplies," among other places for "Oil Creek," thus indicating that the germ of this particular church was planted in this valley three-quarters of a century ago. In contrasting this feeble beginning with the present strength and membership, one may well exclaim: "What hath God wrought?"

1803—PREACHING CALLED FOR.

In 1803 the request for "supplies" was repeated under the name of "Titus's." In 1807 they were sent again under the name of "Oil Creek."

In 1809 "Oil Creek" was reported to Presbytery as able to pay for what preaching it had, which, however, was by no means every Sunday.

1809—FIRST COMMUNION—IN A BARN.

In this first self-supporting year—1809—so far as can be traced, the Presbyterians held here their first communion. The officiating ministers were Messrs. Stockton and Tait, already referred to. Each brought an elder with him, for there were then no elders at Oil Creek.

The place selected was a large log barn of Jonathan Titus, standing near where the Fletcher brick block now does, on the east side of Franklin, between Pine and Spring streets. There came the faithful shepherds to gather the scattered sheep; and their preaching was indeed like the voice of one "crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'" The good women of the time made the place as comfortable as possible, by hanging sheets around the space occupied; and the men furnished it as best they could

There, in simple, solemn earnestness, with the stalls of the oxen around them, was celebrated by these primitive Christians the supper of their Lord and Savior, who himself, at the first, was cradled in a manger.

The names of those who participated, as preserved in the recollection of one then present as a little girl, are:

Mrs. Mary Titus, wife of Jonathan Titus.

Mrs. Mary Kerr, wife of James Kerr.

Mr. Andrew Kerr and his wife Elizabeth.

Mr. James Kerr and his sister.

Mrs. Brown, a widow.

Mrs. William Curry.

Mr. James Curry and his wife Hannah. Ten in all, besides the officiating ministers and elders. That little girl is now among us, a mother in Israel, the worthy wife of Mr. Joseph L. Chase.

In later years, communion seasons were among the most stirring occasions which this quiet region saw, and Titusville became headquarters for ten or fifteen miles around. The tables were duly "fenced," as it was termed, that is, tokens were given to those who were deemed worthy to participate. Two ministers generally officiated, one, it is said, dwelling upon the exceeding sinfulness of all, until it seemed that nearly everyone must be excluded, while the other followed with more comforting and cheerful exhortations. The tables were frequently spread under booths and trees, and an ancient Israelite might easily have mistaken the scene for the feast of tabernacles of his own people. Besides these occasions preaching services and communions were held in different neighborhoods, at whatever happened to be the largest house; and in one neighborhood, near the headwaters of Pithole, this was the house of a Catholic, Hugh McGirl by name. The people were however welcomed under his roof, and mutual dependence in those early days was attended with a spirit of mutual kindness.

Time passed on, and settlers multiplied. A few places were open ground, but nearly all this region was a dense, unbroken forest, requiring vast labor for its removal; and that became again true, which David mentions in the 74th Psalm, that "a man was famous, according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees."

1811–12—REV. AMOS CHASE.

In 1811 or 1812, Rev. Amos Chase left Litchfield county, Ct., for this place, He came on horseback, striking the Allegheny river at Olean; thence by raft to near Tionesta, thence again with his horse. After spending one or two years in observation and travel, he returned to Connecticut, and in 1814 resigned his pastorate there.

He started again, with his family, February 15th, 1815, and arriving in due time, joined Erie Presbytery, June 27th, the same year. A few particulars of his life, as that of the first regular minister of this church, will be appropriate at this point He was born at Sutton, near Boston, May12, 1760; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1780, where he was also converted, and was ordained as a minister at Litchfield, Ct., June 27th, 1787. He was settled at South-Farms near Litchfield, and there held the pastorate for twenty-six years. In 1795 he received an honorary degree from Yale College. Many business men, and some ministers, feel, that after such a length of service, they are justified in retiring to an easy and quiet life. He however took an entirely different view of duty, and renewing his youth, at the age of fifty-five, he decided to enter upon a pioneer life known to be full of labor and of trials. The Congregational Association, in dismissing him after his long pastorate, said in a resolution adopted upon the occasion: "He has proved himself a workman that need not be ashamed; the parish, from a low estate of morality and religion, has become, under his ministrations, as a city set on a hill." Similar testimonials were given by his old parishioners.

In person, he was tall, erect, and of full size and proportion. A determined energy of purpose and action constituted a prominent trait in his character, and, no matter what were the obstacles which lay before him, he was noted for his punctuality in meeting all appointments. In his subsequent labors, he was often found winding through the paths of the forest, fording and swimming streams, climbing rugged hills, and sometimes at night tying his horse under a tree, he slept on the ground with his saddle for a pillow, and then pressed on to meet his appointments to preach the Word of God. He was a man of whom it might very properly be said: he held "the even tenor of his way;" and his success was the result of that kindness of heart and steady labor, which, by degrees, become a means of power and influence in community.

For eleven years, he labored as a mis-

sionary with headquarters mostly at Titusville and Centreville, and established various churches between these points and Lake Erie.

1815—CHURCH PERMANENTLY ORGANIZED.

A permanent organization of the Presbyterian Church at Oil Creek, (Titusville) was made by Mr. Chase in 1815. In giving a report of it he says: "A church was gathered, elders and trusteees selected, and the sealing ordinances administered. The congregation, about two hundred, have continued to appear solemn as well as punctual. The place I speak of is ten miles below Centreville."

1826—REV. AMOS CHASE, SETTLED AS PASTOR.

In 1826 the church gave him a formal call, which is still in existence, and under it he settled at Oil Creek (now Titusville) for half his time, and at Centreville for one-fourth; leaving the remainder for his favorite missionary work, whereby he aided in moulding the early character of all this region. This continued till 1830, when he became seventy years of age. He then retired to Centreville, preaching occasionally until December 23d, 1849, when he fell asleep, in the ninetieth year of his age and the sixty-third of his ministry.

1830—REV. GEORGE W. HAMPSON, SECOND PASTOR.

The next regular pastor was Rev. Geo. W. Hampson, who began his labors, September 1, 1830, and was settled in due form, June 27, 1832. He continued his ministry twenty-two years and six months, bringing the time to March 1, 1853. Mr. Hampson graduated at Jefferson College in 1827, and was licensed to preach in 1830. He was a man of medium stature but very strong muscle; and it is said of him, that many times, when a parishoner, in clearing the forest found a log he could not handle, Parson Hampson would come to the rescue and roll it up with ease. Like Paul, he labored with his own hands, and the crops upon his few acres just west of what is now the corner of Main and Drake streets, gave evidence of superior skill and cultivation. His voice was powerful and was not spared in preaching. His labors in the ministry were untiring; and the older inhabitants who knew him best, speak in high terms of his firmness, faithfulness and zeal.

Want of space prevents a more extended notice of his life which presented many stong and useful points. To condense it, however, into a single sentence, each word of which should be emphasised; it may be truly said of him: "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." After leaving Titusville he preached at Cambridge and Gravel Run, in this county, and other points until October 1st, 1869, when he died at Woodcock borough, of a short and severe illness, after an active service for the Master of thirty-nine years.

Over two such long, laborious and useful lives as those of Chase and Hampson, covering a ministry of a little more than 100 years, with an active service of eighty consecutive years, nearly forty of which were to this church, may we not say, as did St. John in the Apocalypse, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me: "Write. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

1837—CHERRYTREE AND KERR HILL CHURCHES.

During Mr. Hampson's time the churches of Cherrytree and Kerr's Hill were set off by themselves from this church—that of Cherrytree, February 1, 1837. It was a friendly colonization, and Mr. Hampson gave to Cherrytree about one-third of his time.

EARLY CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

There seems to have been, during his ministry, somewhat frequent occasion for discipline, or else it was exercised more thoroughly than is usual in most churches. In one instance it went so far as to call a member to account for not paying a note, given upon settlement of difficulties, in accordance with his promise to one of the sisters of the church. At another time, in his earlier ministry, it appears that some of the elders themselves needed attention, for Mr. Hampson, after recording the names of the four elders then in office, adds the following suggestive words:

"N. B.—Of the elders named above, one—Andrew Kerr—bore rule at this time; the rest were under ecclesiastical embarrassment." At a later date, it would also seem that at least one member of the church was found in a somewhat embarrassed condition from another cause; for the record of a meeting of session in 1845, uses the following language:

"Resolved, That R. C. Sexton visit ——— with reference to his *everlasting drunkenness*."

The name is given, but for obvious reasons it is omitted here.

REV. OTTINGER—THIRD PASTOR.

Mr. Hampson s successor was Rev. Mr. Ottinger, who preached here about one year.

REV. MONTGOMERY—FOURTH PASTOR.

The next was Rev. Mr. Montgomery, who remained about one and a half years.

1858—REV. GEO. H. HAMMER—FIFTH PASTOR.

The next was Rev. George H. Hammer, whose call is dated July 1, 1858, to take effect the following month, August 8. He remained until the fall of 1861, when he entered the army.

1861—REV. SAMUEL WYKOFF—SIXTH PASTOR.

The next was Rev. Samuel Wykoff, whose name first appears December 23, 1861. He continued about two years, and is now located at Portage, Wisconsin.

1863—REV. W. C. CURTISS—7TH PASTOR.

The next was Rev. W. C. Curtiss, who came in 1863, and remained until May 15, 1865.

1865—REV. WILLIAM. HOWELL TAYLOR—8TH PASTOR.

His successor was Rev. William Howell Taylor, whose services began November 2, 1865, and continued nearly four years.

1869 — REV. ALEXANDER SINCLAIR — 9TH PASTOR.

Following him was Rev. Alexander Sinclair, whose ministry commenced November 13, 1869, and continued till May 18, 1874.

1875—REV. ROBT. SLOSS—10TH AND PRESENT PASTOR.

His successor was the present pastor, Rev. Robert Sloss, whose labors began January 17, 1875.

The salaries of these ministers, from 1819 to 1876, were as follows: 1819 to 1823, from $80 to $100 per year for half their time; in 1826, $50 for half the time. The original agreement for this is yet in existence. In 1832 the salary was increased to $200 per year for two-thirds of the time. It was afterwards further increased to $267, and in 1846 to $350 for two-thirds time. In 1858 $600 was the pastor's salary for the whole time. In 1863 it fell back to $400, in 1864 it was made $800, in 1865 $2,000 and in 1869 $3,000, at which sum it has since remained, except for 1871 and 1872, when there was a special appropriation each year of $1,000 extra.

EARLY SALARIES—HOW PAID.

Little of the earlier salaries was paid in money, and many a time has the minister, on his return from a horseback visitation, found the capacity of his saddle-bags tested by a ham, or some similar delicacy, paid by a parishoner.

The following is a sample of the subscriptions to salary from 1819 to 1825: "We, the subscribers, promise to pay the several sums set opposite our names respectively subjoined, unto the trustees of the said congregatiou in grain, at the following prices, to-wit: Wheat at one dollar, rye and corn at fifty cents per bushel; to be delivered at the store of Joseph L. Chase, for the term of one year."

In 1827 the prices voted were: Wheat $1; rye, 50 cents; corn, 62 1-2 cents; oats, 25 cents; buckwheat, 37 1-2 cents per bushel, and bacon 8 cents per pound.

THE SEXTON'S SALARY

corresponded, and the privilege of performing the duties of the position, was let to the lowest bidder. In 1843 it was $19.87 for the whole year. The recitals of these early facts, when contrasted with later years, tend to excite a vein of humor, but they are at the same time suggestive of trials and sacrifices, and also of the great improvement since made.

"STEEPINGS."

Some of the terms employed in the dealings in the former days, between minister and members, almost need translating—for instance we read, "March 30, 1823.—By due bill of sixty-two cents, Mr. Jonathan Titus, Jr., has settled up *steepings* to the present date."

(Signed by both parties.)

Again we read:

"April 9, 1824.—Made a settlement between us of all *steepings*, etc., up to September, 1823."

(Signed by both parties.)

At a later date we find the mysterious word written "*stipends*," referring to installments upon salary.

We come now to speak of the

BUILDINGS

used for public worship.

The first preaching was in private houses, school houses, groves, and such other places as could be found. The first effort toward erecting a structure here by the Presbyterians, was about 1812. It was by way of a log meeting house, made of round logs, and located just east of the old cemetery at the head of Franklin street. It was used for some time but was never entirely finished.

The next building was made of hewn logs; was located a short distance west of the first one, and was commenced the same year the church was formally organized, 1815. Our fathers, with their scanty means, were obliged to move

slowly. They were able to get the building at once into condition for comfortable use, but not to finish it entirely until 1823.

A RATTLESNAKE LOOKS IN.

One of the reminiscences connected with it is this. During service, one warm, pleasant Sunday in July, a large rattlesnake was observed by one of the ladies with his head raised above the window-sill, with the apparent intention of coming in. She gave the alarm, and one of the men, rushing to the rescue, soon removed him from the garden of the Lord and from existence.

That was not the first time the serpent has endeavored to enter the church and been foiled in the attempt.

THE CHURCH FORMERLY HEAD OF FRANKLIN STREET.

The next was a frame structure, erected directly at the head of Franklin street, where the Lutheran Church now stands. The resolution to build was adopted March 31, 1832; the corner stone laid July 4, 1833, and it was dedicated in 1833 or 1834, Rev. Nathaniel West preaching the dedication sermon. With this building there was also delay, and the sun of 1837 shone upon it before it was fully completed. Its cost was then reckoned up and found to be $1,500. The ground it stood upon was donated by Jonathan Titus in 1833. In 1863 the building and part of the lot were sold for $1,000.

1865—THE PRESENT CHURCH.

The same year, 1863, the lot on the corner of Walnut and Franklin streets, where the present church structure stands, was purchased of George Custar for $1,100. This building was finished in 1865, at a cost of about $17,000. Later permanent additions, exclusive of repairs, have cost about $4,000.

1870—THE PARSONAGE.

The Parsonage, or, in ecclesiastical language, the Manse, nearly opposite the church building, came into possession of the church in 1870.

Mrs. Charles Hyde generously donated towards it the sum of $1,000.

DR. JENNINGS GIVES THE ORGAN.

The organ in the church was the timely and valuable gift of Dr. William Jennings, since deceased.

CHURCH AND PARSONAGE DEBT.

The debt upon the parsonage is now about $1,500, and that on the church about $2,000 in addition, which it is hoped will largely disappear with the fading months of the Centennial year.

THE MEBERSHIP

of the church, at times fluctuating, has, on the average, continually increased. Present at the first communion in 1809, as already stated, were ten. At the regular organization in 1815, there were forty, embracing some who resided ten to twelve miles distant. In 1830, it was reduced to about twenty-eight. From 1831 to 1843 the additions ranged from three to seventeen each year. From 1853 to 1858 the pastorates were short, long intervals elapsed without regular ministrations, and the members became scattered.

The sessional records were also wanting, and it became impossible to determine, with accuracy, who the members were:

DISORGANIZATION PREVENTED.

In order to prevent entire disorganization in this latter year, 1858, the Rev. George H. Hammer and the two elders, William Kelley and Caleb M. Allen, who then constituted the session, met in consultation, and among other things adopted the following preamble and resolution: "In view of the fact of the almost disorganized condition of the church, owing to the absence or loss of the sessional records, the inability to determine truly who are in reality members of the church, and the necessity, seen and felt, of a closer union and renewed activity, and more thorough consecration to the service of God, therefore

"Resolved, That a preamble and resolutions be prepared, setting forth, plainly, the facts of the case; and also such a revisal of the confession and covenant adopted and in use in the Synod of West Pennsylvania, as shall adapt it to our peculiar circumstances; and that said preamble, resolutions, confession and covenant, be presented to the church at their meeting, for adoption and signature."

The meeting of the church was accordingly held, October 31, 1858, and recitals and resolutions were adopted, corresponding to the spirit of those already given. In one, their covenant with the Lord is solemnly renewed, and the confession of faith alluded to adopted, and copied in full. Another and the last is in these words:

"Resolved further, That the names hereinafter appended, shall be considered as a true list of the members of this church; after proper exertions shall have been made to secure the signature and assent of those who are supposed to be members thereof."

To this confession of faith are attached twenty-eight names, as follows:

William Kelley, C. M. Allen, Elders; Jos. L. Chase, David M. Knapp, Chas. Chase, Mrs. Anna Isabella Allen, Mrs. Susan J. Chase, Mrs. Rebecca H. Titus, Mrs. Hannah Curry, Mrs. Ann Chase, Mrs. Eliza Shugert, Mrs. Rebecca B. Bates, Mrs. Ruth Felton, Mrs. Margaret Knapp, Mrs. Mary Keller, Mrs. Margaret B. Curry, Mrs. Juline Kerr, Mrs. Margaret Curry, Mrs. Sarah Hand, Sarah Ann Hammer, Jane Curry, Jane Kerr, Jane Davidson, Mary Irwin, Harriet Wilson.

LATER RECORDS.

Since 1858 the sessional records are regular and complete. The membership in 1868 was 136. In 1872 it was 236. In 1876, as reported to the last General Assembly, 365. In 1874 parts of the missing records were found. Those found fill the time from September 1, 1830, to May 21, 1846, about fifteen and a half years. From that date to 1858 the sessional records are yet missing or were never kept.

The records of the Trustees and the business part of the church, for a long time widely scattered, have been so brought together as to form a substantially continuous statement from 1819 to 1848. These contain also much which throws light upon what the session should have recorded.

From 1848 to the present time there are several long blanks in the business or Trustees' part of the church, owing, in part, to the shifting character of the population, and to such frequent changes in the office, Trustees being elected annually.

THE LEGAL FOUNDATION

of the church rests upon a special charter, granted by the Supreme Court of the State in 1838, and originally recorded in the office of the Secretary of State. The corporate name, as there given in its exact *brevity*, consisted of these words:

"*The Presbyterian Congregation of Oil Creek in the county of Crawford.*" The charter declares the object of the association to be: "The worship of Almighty God agreeably to the doctrines and usages of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

By application to the Court of Common Pleas of this county in 1870, some of the particulars of the charter including the name were changed, and all duly recorded in the office of the Recorder of the county. The legal name now is "*First Presbyterian Church of Titusville.*"

In the division of the Presbyterian Church of the United States in 1837, this particular church went with the New School branch, and so continued until the branches were united again in 1870.

INTERESTING RECORDS.

A few further references to the records may here be appropriate. In 1824 it was voted to introduce into the meeting house a "ten-plate stove and pipe." It was regarded as quite an important event; and certainly in winter time was a very comfortable one.

In 1843, a mode, substantially like the present mode of selling seats, was adopted, by way of fixing a valuation upon each, and then selling the choice to the highest bidders in succession.

Before this time, those who aided in erecting the building, took pay by becoming owners of seats, to the amount paid. This, under the changes wrought by time, led to great confusion, and it was therefore abandoned, so that thenceforth, neither called anything his own, except for occupancy as bid off for a year at a time.

In 1827, by vote of the church, Titusville and its surroundings were divided into four districts, "for *visiting* and *catechising*."

MUSIC

also seems to have received its due share of attention and *prominence*, for we find that in 1826 three reading clerks and four singing clerks were elected, and immediately after the election is stated, the record adds, "and they are all requested to take the *front* seats." In those days,

"LINING THE HYMNS"

was customary, but in 1831 quite a discussion arose whether it should be continued. This occurred, as the record states, "Monday, February 14, 1831, at a large and respectable meeting of Oil Creek congregation." The following motion was adopted: That "the lining of psalms and hymns while singing in church be dispensed with." "Against lining, 16; for lining, 11."

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

The theme before us is by no means exhausted, but these reminiscences must approach a close.

The population of Titusville increased from 438 by the census of 1860 to 8,639 by the census of 1870. In this increase was a large element of business capacity and Christian character, which at once assimilated with the former inhabitants, and thus formed a community of an unusual

degree of intelligence and energy. The church shared in the results.

The financial condition of the church has always been sustained as well as, and often better, than could be expected under all its circumstnnces, external and internal.

Never up to the point of sanctified giving, yet liberality has been its characteristic, as also of the community in which it is located. In one recent year it raised over $8,000, in another it gave to foreign missions over $400 and to home missions over $300. Its poor are well and regularly cared for by an efficient board of deacons and by private charity.

REVIVALS

marked its course in the earlier and later years. Their special features and touching incidents alone would ocupy the entire time of these exercises, and must therefore be omitted; 1823, 1833, 1834, 1870, 1872, 1874, 1875, 1876 are noticeable in this respect, and doubtless many other years, but the records of them are lost. That of 1333 commenced from a sermon preached by Rev. Thomas Anderson, then of Franklin, from Malechi 3, 10, commencing: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse." During the past year over sixty have been added, and the church as a body seems to be taking that higher ground on which conversions may e expected at almost any time. The present officers, besides the pastor, Rev. Robert Sloss, are:

Six Elders.

Four Deacons.

Three Trustees.

The Sunday School, of which Mr. Lewis B. Silliman by long and active service has become the veteran Superintendent, averages about 240, besides officers and teachers, and such is the faithfulness of those in charge, that many are found prepared to step from the school into the church.

About four years ago, a mission school, of which Mr. Jos. A. Neill is Superintendent, was established in the south part of the city, with seven scholars the first Sunday. The scholars now number over 160, with an average attendance of 120. A lot has been generously donated by the brothers Dr. W. B. and Col. E. A. L. Roberts, and a commodious chapel erected upon it within the last year at an expense of over $1,200 including furniture. Thus, under the blessing of the Almighty, the church has enlarged her borders, has lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes.

RETROSPECTION AND CONCLUSION.

One going over the history of this church is like a traveler over the face of the earth. He will find lights and shadows, "sunny sides" and "shady sides," the slough of despond" and the "delectable mountains." Yea, he will find where it tasted the bitter waters of Marah, and again, where, in a kind Providence those waters were healed. He will find the desert; and then again, he will come to Elim, where the people were refreshed by "three-score-and-ten palm trees and twelve wells of water;" and in looking upward, he will also behold, in his heavens, the beaming cross, the Star of Bethlehem, and the Sun of Righteousness.

May the energy and spirit of sacrifice which marked the early days of this church and of the church universal; may the devotion and liberality which have been prominent in their later years characterize all their future course with an increasing intensity. Yea, as in the City of Brotherly Love the great Corliss engine now moves and controls the machinery of a World's Exposition, so may the time come when true religion shall control the principles and actions of a *world's inhabitants*; and thus continue until the church militant shall join the church triumphant in shouting:

"Blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor and power and might be unto our God, forever and ever. Amen.

Pastor—Rev. Robert Sloss.

Elders—Samuel Minor, Edward O. Emerson, Joseph A. Neill. Lewis B. Silliman, Lyman Stewert, Ebenezer K. Thompson.

Deacons—William M. Irish, Samuel T. Neill, Charles G. Robinson, Richard W. Evans.

Trustees—Lewis B, Silliman, John Lammers, C. Marvin Coburn.